DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 098 607 CS 201 702

AUTHOR Golub, Lester S.
TITLE English Teacher Performance and Student Linguistic Performance.
PUB DATE 74
NOTE 21p.; Study prepared at Pennsylvania State University

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.75 HC Not Available from EDRS. PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS Composition (Literary); Dialects; Elementary Secondary Education; Grammar; Language Development; *Linguistic Competence; *Linguistic Performance; Reading; Spelling; *Teacher Responsibility; *Teacher Role; Teaching Models; *Teaching Skills; Vocabulary

ABSTRACT

Certain teaching performances needed to elicit and reinforce specific linguistic performances from the students fall under the categories of speaking a variety of standard English, reading, spelling, vocabulary, and grammatical structures and writing. As a model of linguistic usage, the teacher must speak a standard variety of English, build on the student's language acquisition started at home, and select good models of written and spoken English and match them to the student's level of understanding and development. In reading, the teacher must assess a student's reading ability and provide linguistic activities for improvement. To overcome the complexities of spelling problems, the teacher must be competent in the systematic study of the English sound system and its relation to English orthography. To teach words as concepts, the teacher must provide students with the simple concepts needed to understand more complex concepts. In teaching grammatical structure and writing, there are four basic problems: making the student aware of his inner voice; teaching the student that expository writing demands more stringent observance of grammatical rules; making the student writer less egocentric and more aware of his audience; and providing for logical and appropriate language behaviors. (HOD)

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ED 098607

# ENGLISH TEACHER PERFORMANCE AND STUDENT LINGUISTIC PERFORMANCE

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL BY MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY Lester S. Golub
TO ERIC AND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION. FURTHER REPRODUCTION OUTSIDE THE ERIC SYSTEM REQUIRES PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER"

Lester S. Golub

The Pennsylvania State University

A major assumption in teaching language is that there is some interaction between a teacher's classroom performance and a student's linguistic performance. The linguistic performance of his students is an English teacher's main concern (Carrol, 1969). Teacher performance is akin to linguistic performance in that it deals with behavior; in this case, the teacher's behavior as agent between the learning objective, some linguistic behavior, and the learner. There are, indeed, certain teaching performances needed to elicit and reinforce specific linguistic performance from students.

Teacher performance has been described by Flanders (1967) as the interaction of student-teacher talk for the teacher's purpose of: (1) accepting student feelings, (2) giving praise, (3) accepting, clarifying, or making use of student's ideas, (4) asking a question, (5) lecturing, giving facts or opinions, (6) giving directions, (7) giving criticism; and for the student's purpose of: (8) student response, (9) student initiated talk, and (10) student-teacher silence. Such a definition of student-teacher performance is too general to be much help in

CS 201 703

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

terms of eliciting specific kinds of linguistic performance from students. This description of the teaching act does, however, start to focus on the possible kinds of talk as linguistic performance in the classroom.

The dimension lacking in Flander's interaction analysis is a description of the specific teacher performance needed to elicit specific student linguistic performance. I would like to propose that this kind of English teacher performance can be described, at least in a limited way, under the student linguistic performance categories of : (1) speaking a variety of standard English, (2) reading, (3) spelling, (4) vocabulary, (5) grammatical structures and writing.

— Speaking a variety of standard English. Most teachers of English enter the teaching profession with some sense of their being a model of language usage for the child. This may or may not be true. Certain theories of psycholinguistics have it that a child has a built-in ability to learn his native language just by the process of observing and interacting with persons who know and use the language. Certainly, the young child of normal (and even below normal) intelligence has a remarkable ability to acquire the structure of his native language system without much direct instruction.

With this in mind, the teacher of English must be a model of some standard dialect of English speech and language use for students. A complicating factor is that students tend to

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

imitate the dialect and speech style of their peers rather than their teachers. Nevertheless, the teacher of English must build on the student's language acquisition started at home and continued in the streets. Indeed, the teacher might speak a different dialect from the student's. For the student, learning a new dialect might be more painful than learning a new language since the contrast between dialects is not as well marked as is the contrast between languages. What, in effect, the student must do in terms of linguistic performance is to learn the register and dialect differences of the school and of the home community.

The English teacher must be able to select good models of both written and spoken language to use with students. If nonstandard models of spoken or written language are used, the teacher must be able to choose models appropriate to the student's development, especially reading materials which provide a much richer language experience for the child than does speech. The teacher must be able to match spoken and written models of language to the student's level of understanding. This is a very complex psycholinguistic problem.

As a model of linguistic usage, the English teacher must:

(a) speak a standard dialect of English. There are many standard white and black dialects of English.

(b) exhibit sensitivity and acceptance of the students' dialect, less mature usage, and individual speech and language style.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

(c) choose wisely among the various models of spoken and written language.

(d) explain the circumstances when nonstandard models are used.

(e) choose language materials appropriate to the students' developmental level (understanding and enjoyment).

(f) talk and interact with students. Here the Flanders description of teacher performance can be extremely useful.

Reading. Researchers in the teaching and learning of reading tell us that reading is a complicated process, yet most children who attend school regularly learn how to read. Silent reading of a printed message involves decoding the message into some form of covert spoken behavior or "inner speech," and that in turn, if the message is to be understood, depends upon the student's underlying competence in the grammatical and semantic rules of the language. A student can read if he can pronounce in his inner voice and understand the message he is reading. Not all normal persons can perform the linguistic behavior of reading with the same ability. The teacher must be able to assess a student's reading ability and to provide the linguistic activities for improving reading ability. To do this, the teacher of English must be able to use diagnostic testing instruments and readability indices developed by research specialists.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

A student does not stop learning to read when he has learned to "crack the code." On the contrary, as long as understanding is a part of the linguistic act of reading, then reading is also a concern of the literature teacher, since the good teacher of English literature must teach for an in-depth understanding of the work.

As a mediator of reading behavior, the teacher of English must:

(a) provide the student with phoneme-grapheme correspondence rules so that he can accurately predict, from a knowledge of its spelling, how a word will be sounded.

(b) provide the student with the intonation patterns of English sentences.

(c) choose reading materials appropriate to the student's developmental level (understanding and enjoyment).

(d) administer diagnostic tests and readability indices.

(e) make wise decisions from results of diagnostic tests and readability indices.

(f) evaluate the student's comprehension of the message.

(g) encourage the student's interpretation of the message.

(h) help the student understand that reading is the production of spoken language in the inner voice.

(i) encourage oral reading of drama, narrative, and exposition.

(j) use tapes to record and perfect student's oral reading.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Spelling. Spelling differs from reading in that in order to spell a word the student must know how a word will be spelled from a knowledge of its sounds. If a student does not know how a word will be spelled from its sound, then he can only predict how it will be spelled. The chances of this prediction being correct are mathematically slight. Because of the complexities of the reading and spelling problems of English speaking children, the teacher must become as competent as possible in the systematic study and teaching of the English sound system and its relation to English orthography. Spelling patterns which Fries (1963) presents can be very helpful for teachers. The teacher must be able to present groups of these spelling patterns so that students can change the initial, medial, or terminal letter and thereby change the word, for example:

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| bed | fed | led | Ned | red | Ted | wed | zed |
| bed | bad | bid | --- | bud | | | |
| boy | bel | Ben | bet | bey | | | |

While working on spelling patterns the teacher can also explain the (C)VC spoken syllable pattern in English so that the student can understand how blends, digraphs, and diphthongs operate and the rules which govern them. Finally, the student must learn to scan a word in reading and in pronunciation more than once so that he can build the (C)VC pattern on another. In short, a student cannot know how to pronounce the letters of the word type until he has made one complete pass of the

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

word, sees the e on the end and comes back for another pass to pronounce the y /ey/ and not /i/. Likewise, a student told to spell /tayp/ with a y must go all the way to the end of the word and then know that he has to add an e in order to obtain the sound of /ay/ for the y.

As a mediator of spelling behavior, the English teacher must:

(a) show how a word will be spelled from a knowledge of its sounds.

(b) explain why a word is misspelled even though all the letters of the misspelled words provide the sound of the word.

(c) explain lexical ambiguities such as homonyms, synonyms, antonyms.

(d) explain and manipulate spelling patterns.

(e) explain and manipulate spoken and written syllables.

(f) explain affixing in English.

Vocabulary. Vocabulary is a major factor in becoming educated. In order to be really literate, a student needs to be taught more words, not fewer. Yet throughout his elementary school English language curriculum he is provided controlled vocabulary study even though his math, science, and social studies texts and materials use technical and nontechnical terms in a very uncontrolled, frequently frenetic manner. The number of words that appear in reading matter with fair fre-

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

quickly is quite large, about 30,000 words. However, if we also consider the words that appear only occasionally, the number will be still larger. Then, when we consider that many words can have several denotative meanings and any number of connotative meanings, we really see how important vocabulary study must be. Consider the word home in the following sentences:

In war we must protect the home front.
The baseball player made three home runs.
The pigeons were trained to home.
Home base is between third and first base.
A house is not a home.

The student must have an extensive vocabulary to understand literature. English educators and psycholinguists have been generally silent in telling English teachers the percentage of words in a message a student must know and the complexity of sentence structure he can handle in order to get meaning from a message.

Words also name concepts. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the development of vocabulary is closely related to concept formation (Carroll, 1946b). A concept expressed as a word possesses a particular combination of criterial attributes which mark it off from other related concepts. The concept statement is marked off from related concepts such as explanation, question, negation, sentence, paragraph, essay, by the fact that each of the previously mentioned words is a

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

one-or-statement. Other concepts name structures or experiences and teaching of these concepts involves careful identification of the situation in which they occur or can be experienced, for example, if we want to teach the concept of determiner we will have to experience it in relation to the concepts a/an, much, adjectives, and possessive to mention only four of its related concepts. In any case, the formation of concepts depends upon the student's ability to perceive in certain ways. In order to teach words as concepts, the teacher must provide the student with the simple concept (subordinate concept) necessary to understand a more complex concept (supraordinate concept).

As a mediator of vocabulary growth, the English teacher must:

(a) assist the student's learning of the many words found in the student's literature, science, social studies, and other reading matter.

(b) use new or infrequently used words in different function-slots in sentences.

(c) expand word meanings and change word functions by the addition or deletion of affixes.

(d) expand word meanings by contrasting connotative and denotative values of a word.

(e) order the presentation of new words according to the student's logical ordering, understanding, and perception of the concepts which the words represent.

(f) provide experiences for students to use new words in

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

oral and written discourse.

Grammatical structure and writing. Writing, as an encoding process, is a much more complicated process than reading, decoding, since it involves so many more behavioral and cognitive alternatives. Teachers of English do not need formal research to convince them that there are grammatical errors in children's writing, grammatical errors in the sense that the child's linguistic performance does not conform to the rules for sentence generation. In a recent research, I have discovered twenty-one types of syntactic deviations found in the written sentences of fourth and sixth graders (Golub, 1970). In the case of spoken language, it is not likely that native speakers speak ungrammatically, since the rules of spoken English are not the same as those of written English. For example, if you ask a person his name, he applies a deletion rule and says, "Johnny," not, "My name is Johnny." There are some grammatical "errors" which we hear in spoken language, but these are generally in rules of agreement, strong verb tense forms, and lack of parallel grammatic construction in coordinated phrases, but these errors can be attributed to improper analogy, limitation of memory span, or lack of or improper self-editing. A student generally possesses the basic spoken language grammatical competence that underlies his performance.

There are four basic problems in teaching the student to write which persist throughout the students' high school

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

and college careers. I shall list them in the order which I believe pedagogically important: (a) making the student aware of his internalized, thinking voice, (b) teaching the student that the conventions of expository writing demand more stringent observance of grammatical rules than ordinary inner or external speech, and (c) making the student writer less egocentric and more aware of his audience, (d) providing for and reinforcing logical and appropriate written language behaviors. Each of the problems deserve some explanation.

Vygotsky's research (1962) has indicated that given a problem, primary grade children will verbalize audibly their thoughts while solving the problem; intermediate grade children will solve the problem with subvocal thought and language. Third and fourth grade children are really not consciously aware of the fact that their language of thought has become an inner voice. The high school student must be made aware of this event. They actually have to be aided in discovering their inner voice. Teachers have successfully done this by using photographs of human situations (not stereotyped advertisement photography). The students are given a problem such as: "Why is the policeman chasing the blond boy?" or "How does the black boy feel about the white boy?" The students are given a minute or two to think silently, to remember, and to recall in their audible voice what they were thinking about in their inner voice.

Once the inner voice is discovered the students can start

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

writing down what is going on in their inner voice. They became aware of the fact that writing is another way of externalizing the inner voice. The teacher must obtain and maintain this flow of speech and writing in the classroom. Once the flow is self-sustaining, the teacher can then attack problem (b), teaching the students that the conventions of expository writing demand more stringent observance of grammatical rules than ordinary speech. One way of doing this might be to present, side by side, standard spoken expressions which have different written forms. For example, I frequently hear educated adults say "He done it," but I am sure that they write, "He did it." Some students will infer what rules are necessary in going from spoken to written language. The list of twenty types of deviations (Golub, 1970, a) made by fourth and sixth graders is helpful since it delimits the kinds of errors made by students and narrows the range of teacher explained rules of written language.

The problem of making the student write less egocentrically with an awareness of his audience is difficult but worth approaching. Language is ambiguous. Even professional writers may write sentences which have more than one interpretation. A sentence as simple as <u>They are eating apples</u> can have more than one interpretation. Teachers of composition are familiar with this problem. The teacher says, "I don't understand what you mean here." The student replies in utter frustration, "Well, I know what I mean." Frequently, the context in which a statement occurs or the experience the reader will bring to

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

to be art makes it understandable, but this is not always the case and the student writer must learn to keep the characteristics of his audience in mind as he writes. Flavell (1966) has found that the student's ability to take the audience's attributes into account develops with age. It is an ability that needs to be taught in the writing curriculum. One method suggested is to have students write two letters dealing with a common problem to two different people. For example, a mother whose state welfare check has just been stopped would describe her problem differently if she were writing to the governor of the state or to her sister who is also on welfare.

The last problem, providing for reinforcing logical and appropriate written language behaviors, is of paramount concern for the teacher. The comments of "run-on," "awk," or "frag" do not help the student with his written language performance. Neither do they reinforce the appropriate linguistic behaviors also abundant in most students' writing. Mellon (1967) has shown that students who are given sentence combining exercises wherein the fourth sentence is a transform of the first three sentences, learn to write with more embedding than those not given these types of exercises. The following is the type of embedding suggested by this research:

1. Jack and Betty went for a drive.
2. They drove over the Rocky Mountains.
3. Yesterday was the beginning of summer vacation.
4. Yesterday, the beginning of summer vacation, Jack

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

and Betty drove over the Rocky Mountains.

The objective of this type of activity should be the student's knowing of well-formed sentences resulting from multiple kernel sentence embeddings. Mellon honestly reports that although the experimental group did produce more embedded kernel sentences, the overall quality of the writing of control group and experimental group was not statistically different.

Koellner (1969) believes that the "talk-write-reward" model is the most effective strategy for teaching composition. It certainly deserves study, considering that the traditional write-correct-rewrite strategy generally in use is so ineffective in high school, college, and university teaching of writing.

As a mediator of writing behavior, the teacher of English must:

(a) make the student aware of his internalized, thinking voice.

(b) show the student that the conventions of expository writing demand more stringent observance of grammatical rules than does ordinary inner or external speech.

(c) explain the reasons for types of lexical and syntactic deviations in students' writing for those students who cannot infer them.

(d) make the student writer less egocentric and more aware of his audiences.

(e) explain lexical and syntactic ambiguity.

(f) explain differences in experience and point of view

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

of readers.

(c) provide for and reinforce logical and appropriate written language behaviors.

(d) provide students with sentence embedding activities which produce well-formed sentences.

A logical conclusion for this paper is a checklist of teacher performance to accompany desired student linguistic performance. Such a checklist should help determine whether or not educators can instruct English teachers in this type of performance. The "Student Linguistic Performance -- Teacher Performance Appraisal Guide" which follows might help researchers determine whether teacher performance can affect students' linguistic performance:

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

| Student Linguistic Performance | Teacher Performance | 0 Not observed | 1 Very weak | 2 Weak | 3 Average | 4 Very good | 5 Excellent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) Speaking a variety of standard English. | (a) Speaks a standard dialect of English. There are many standard white and black dialects of English. | | | | | | |
| | (b) Exhibits sensitivity and acceptance of students' dialects, less mature usage, and individual speech and language style. | | | | | | |
| | (c) Chooses wisely among the various models of spoken and written language. | | | | | | |
| | (d) Explains circumstances when substandard models are used. | | | | | | |
| | (e) Chooses language materials appropriate to the student's developmental level (understanding and enjoyment). | | | | | | |
| | (f) Talks and interacts with students. The Flanders scale of interaction analysis can be used for determining this item. | | | | | | |
| (2) Reading | (a) Provides the student with phoneme-grapheme correspondence rules so that he can accurately predict how a word will be sounded from a knowledge of its spelling. | | | | | | |

| Student Linguistic Performance | Teacher Performance | 0 not observed | 1 very weak | 2 weak | 3 average | 4 very good | 5 excellent | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (2) Reading (continued) | (b) Provides the student with intonation patterns of English sentences. | | | | | | | |
| | (c) Chooses reading materials appropriate to the student's developmental level (understanding and enjoyment). | | | | | | | |
| | (d) Administers diagnostic tests and readability indices. | | | | | | | |
| | (e) Makes wise decisions from results of diagnostic tests and readability indices. | | | | | | | |
| | (f) Evaluates the student's comprehension of the message. | | | | | | | |
| | (g) Encourages the student's interpretation of the message. | | | | | | | |
| | (h) Helps the student understand that reading is the production of spoken language in the inner voice. | | | | | | | |
| | (i) Encourages oral reading of drama, narrative, and exposition. | | | | | | | |
| | (j) Uses tape to record and perfect student's oral reading. | | | | | | | |
| (3) Spelling | (a) Shows how a word will be spelled from a knowledge of its sounds. | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

| Student Linguistic Performance | Teacher Performance | Not observed | Needs work | Average | Good | Excellent | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (3) Spelling (continued) | (b) Explains why a word is misspelled even though all the letters of the misspelled word provide the sound of the word. | | | | | | |
| | (c) Explains lexical ambiguities such as honomyms, synonyms, and antonyms. | | | | | | |
| | (d) Explains and manipulates spelling patterns. | | | | | | |
| | (e) Explains and manipulates spoken and written syllables. | | | | | | |
| | (f) Explains and manipulates affixing in English. | | | | | | |
| (4) Vocabulary | (a) Offers student many words that are found in the student's literature, science, social studies, and other reading matter beyond the controlled readers. | | | | | | |
| | (b) Uses new and infrequently used words in different function-slots in sentences. | | | | | | |
| | (c) Expands word meanings and changes word functions by the addition or deletion of affixes. | | | | | | |
| | (d) Expands word meanings by contrasting connotative and denotative values of words. | | | | | | |
| | (e) Orders the presentation of new words according to the student's logical ordering, understanding, and perception of the concepts which the word represents. | | | | | | |

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

| Student Linguistic Performance | Teacher Performance | 0 Not observed | 1 Very weak | 2 Weak | 3 Average | 4 Very good | 5 Superior | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (4) Vocabulary (continued) | (f) Provides experiences for students to use new and infrequent words in oral and written discourse. | | | | | | | |
| (5) Grammatical Structures and Writing | (a) Makes the student aware of his internalized, thinking voice. | | | | | | | |
| | (b) Shows the student that the conventions of expository writing demand more stringent observance of grammatical rules than does ordinary inner or external speech. | | | | | | | |
| | (c) Explains the reasons for types of lexical and syntactic deviations in student's writing for those who cannot infer them. | | | | | | | |
| | (d) Makes the student writer less egocentric and more aware of his audience. | | | | | | | |
| | (e) Explains lexical and syntactic ambiguity. | | | | | | | |
| | (f) Explains differences in experience and point of view of readers. | | | | | | | |
| | (g) Provides for and reinforces logical and desirable written language behavior. | | | | | | | |
| | (h) Provides students with sentence embedding activities which produce well-formed sentences. | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

REFERENCES

Carroll, John B. "Psycholinguistics and the Elementary Language Arts," in Oral Language and Reading (James Walden, ed.). Champaign, Ill.: NCTE, 1969, pp. 1-13. (a)

Carroll, John B. "Words, Meanings, and Concepts," Harvard Educational Review, 34 (1964), pp. 178-202. (b)

Chomsky, Noam. Aspects of the Theory of Syntax. Cambridge, Mass.: The M.I.T. Press, 1965.

Flanders, Ned A. "Some Relationships Among Teacher Influence, Pupil Attitudes and Achievement," in Interaction Analysis: Theory, Research, and Application (Amidon and Hough, eds.) Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1967, pp. 217-242.

Flavell, John H. "The Development of Two Related Forms of Social Cognition: Role-Taking and Verbal Communication," in Perceptual Development in Children (A.H. Kidd and J. L. Rivoire, eds.) New York: International Universities Press, 1966, pp. 246-272.

Fredrick, W. C., Golub, L.S., and Johnson, S. L. "Analysis of the Linguistic Abilities Test." Technical Report No. 121. Madison: Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Cognitive Learning, 1970.

Fries, Charles C. Linguistics and Reading. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1963.

Golub, L. S., and Fredrick, W. C. "Linguistic Structures and Deviations in Children's Written Sentences." Paper delivered at AERA, Minneapolis, March, 1970. (a)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Soderbergh, Frederick, W. C., and Johnson, S. L. "Development and Refinement of Measures of Linguistic Ability." Working Paper No. 33. Madison: Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Cognitive Learning, 1970. (D)

[illegible], Paul A. Phoneme-Grapheme Correspondences as Cues to Spelling Improvement. Stanford, California: School of Education, Stanford University, December 31, 196[illegible].

[illegible], Dennis. Social Class, Language, and Education. New York: Schocken Books, 1968.

[illegible], John C. Transformational Sentence-Combining: A Method of Enhancing the Development of Syntactic Fluency in English Composition. Cambridge, Mass.: Graduate School of Education, Harvard University, 1967. (also published as an NCTE Research Report.)

[illegible], Wayne and Peterson, Joe. A Statement of Skills and Objectives for the Wisconsin Prototypic System of Reading Skill Development. Working Paper No. 23. Madison: Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Cognitive Learning, 1969.

Vygotsky, Lev. Thought and Language. Cambridge, Mass.: The M.I.T. Press, 196[illegible].

Zoellner, Robert. "A Behavioral Approach to Writing." College English. Vol. 30, No. 4, January, 1969, pp. 267-320.